

XLVIII.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters, addressed to "The Editors of the Ibis":—

SIRS,—A male specimen of the Andaman Teal (*Nettion albigulare*) having just died at the Zoological Garden here, and having been forwarded to the Museum, I have taken the opportunity of examining the trachea, and find it to be furnished with a well-developed bony bulb, very similar to that of the Common Teal (*Nettion crecca*), as figured in Yarrell's 'British Birds' (4th edition, vol. iv. p. 391).

Yours &c.,

F. FINN.

India Museum, Calcutta,
May 9th.

SIRS,—If Mr. C. E. Nipper's identification of a Honey-Buzzard in the cases in Somersetshire referred to by Mr. W. P. Westell in your last issue (above, p. 515) is correct, we have a remarkable instance of transference of habits. The Honey-Buzzard has hitherto been found breeding during the last days of May or June in well-wooded districts, at no great elevation, and always in trees. Moreover, I am not acquainted with any authentic record of more than three eggs of the Honey-Buzzard having been found in a nest, and the clutch almost always consists of two.

The Common Buzzard, which breeds regularly in a neighbouring county, lays in April and May, breeds on cliff-faces and in lofty situations, while about twelve per cent. of the nests contain four eggs.

Yours &c.,

FRANCIS C. R. JOURDAIN.

Clifton Vicarage, Ashburne, Derbyshire,
July 15th, 1901.

SIRS,—My friend Mr. Arthur P. Page permits me to send particulars of a Nutcracker shot by a gamekeeper near Ilkley, Yorkshire, on the 5th of Jan., 1901, and purchased by Mr. Page in the flesh on the same day. Unfortunately the sex was not determined. On comparing this specimen with the two Dutch examples sent by Heer F. E. Blaauw to Dr. Sclater (*cf.* Bull. B. O. Club, vol. xi. p. 48, Feb. 28, 1901),

I find that it belongs to the slender-billed or eastern form, *Nucifraga caryocatactes macrorhynchos*, and it is therefore interesting as indicating, so far as is known, the western limit of the irruption of this bird in Europe during the last months of 1900. A Nutcracker, which may also belong to this form, has been recorded by the Rev. H. Marmaduke Langdale as having been shot at Chilgrove, in West Sussex, on Dec. 21st, 1900 (Zool. 1901, p. 107).

I have followed Dr. Stejneger (Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. 1888, p. 426) in using C. L. Brehm's name *macrorhynchos* rather than *leptorhyncha* of Dr. R. Blasius.

Yours &c.,

W. RUSKIN BUTTERFIELD.

4 Stanhope Place, St. Leonard's-on-Sea,
July 6th, 1901.

SIRS,—From Herr Herluf Winge's letter (see above, p. 516) it would appear that the naturalists of Copenhagen are unable to discover any traces of Pelicans in West Jutland, and that, notwithstanding six years of "much enquiry, only negative evidence is accumulating"! One may be permitted to wonder what form these lengthy and interesting enquiries have taken. I imagine that a working field-ornithologist would settle the point in a few days. I notice, however, that Herr Winge admits that he has only visited the Ringkjöbing fjord twice in twenty years. I venture to suggest to our friends in Denmark that this is not a matter to be solved by references to musty tomes, or by antiquarian researches, even though they extend back to the Stone Age. It is a simple question of outdoor observation. May I contribute one further link of evidence which, if not positive, is at least not negative? I quote an extract from a letter addressed to me last July by an English naturalist:—

"I have just read your letter in 'The Ibis' on Pelicans in West Jutland. It may interest you to know (for in a measure it corroborates what you saw) that, along with a friend, I spent a fortnight there last spring (May, 1900).

“On May 21st, 1900, we were right down at the mouth of the Tarm river, where it runs into the Ringkjöbing fjord. There is a small island about half a mile out in the fjord. I waded to this island; at low tide there is a sandbank left dry on one side of it. I there saw a pair of Pelicans. In my mind there is not a doubt about it, as I had field-glasses with me, and got fairly close to them before they flew off in the direction of Tipperen.

“I have drawn a rough map of the district, and marked with a red cross the spot where I saw the Pelicans. No doubt you will be able to make it out, as you were, I think, all over this ground.”

The red cross on the map referred to is within half a dozen miles of the spot where my late brother and I saw the Pelicans in May, 1893. I would add, for the information of future visitors to West Jutland, that the Pelicans are *not* to be looked for on dry land or fen, but exclusively on the open salt-waters and tidal flats of the Ringkjöbing fjord.

Yours &c.,

ABEL CHAPMAN.

Houxy, Wark-on-Tyne, Northumberland,
Aug. 18th, 1901.

Sale of Alphonse Milne-Edwards's Library.—The following are some of the prices realized by ornithological books at the sale of the library of the late Alphonse Milne-Edwards, which took place at Paris in May last. The produce of the sale was given by the deceased's will to the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle of Paris, to be employed in buying additions to the Collections:—Audebert et Vieillot's 'Histoire naturelle et générale des Colibris,' 2 vols., 200 fr.; Bâdeker's 'Die Eier du europäischen Vögel,' 130 fr.; Bettoni's 'Storia naturale degli uccelli che nidificano in Lombardia,' 2 vols., 205 fr.; Bonaparte et Schlegel's 'Monographie des Loxiens,' 62 fr.; Buller's 'Birds of New Zealand,' 90 fr.; ditto, ed. 2, 2 vols., 135 fr.; 'Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum,'

27 vols., 1250 fr. ; Dresser's 'Birds of Europe,' 8 vols., 1140 fr. ; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Bucerotidæ,' 170 fr. ; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Phasianidæ,' 2 vols., 1350 fr. ; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Pittidæ,' 185 fr. ; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Paradiseidæ,' 180 fr. ; Elliot's 'Monograph of the Tetraoninæ,' 176 fr. ; Elliot's 'Birds of North America,' 2 vols., 225 fr. ; Eyton's 'Osteologia Avium,' 100 fr. ; Gould's 'Birds of the Voyage of the Beagle,' 135 fr. ; Gould's 'Birds of Australia,' 8 vols., 3650 fr. ; Gould's 'Birds of New Guinea,' 5 vols., 1300 fr. ; Gould's 'Birds of Asia,' 7 vols., 1550 fr. ; Gould's 'Icones Avium,' 350 fr. ; Gould's 'Trochilidæ,' 5 vols., 1550 fr. ; Gray's 'Genera of Birds,' 3 vols., 450 fr. ; 'The Ibis,' 1859-1900, 1650 fr. ; Jerdon's 'Birds of India,' 3 vols., 100 fr. ; 'Journal für Ornithologie,' 1853-88, 300 fr. ; Legge's 'Birds of Ceylon,' 140 fr. ; Malherbe's 'Monographie des Picidées,' text and Atlas in 4 vols., 440 fr. ; Selater's 'Monograph of the Jacamars and Puff-birds,' 100 fr. ; Selater and Salvin's 'Exotic Ornithology,' 205 fr. ; Sharpe's 'Monograph of the Alcedinidæ,' 160 fr. ; Sharpe & Wyatt's 'Monograph of the Hirundinidæ,' 2 vols., 145 fr. ; Shelley's 'Monograph of the Nectariniidæ,' 100 fr. ; Siebold's 'Fauna Japonica,' Aves, 210 fr. ; Temminck and Knip's 'Histoire naturelle générale des Pigeons,' 2 vols., 500 fr. ; Vieillot's 'Histoire naturelle des Oiseaux de l'Amérique Septentrionale,' 2 vols., 260 fr.

Honorary Degree for an Ornithologist.—The first Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science given by the University of Oxford was granted to the Senior Editor of 'The Ibis,' in a Convocation held in the Theatre, on the 20th of June last. Prof. Love, in presenting Dr. P. L. Selater for this degree, made the following Latin speech :—

"Adest Philippus Lutley Selater, Sodalis Societatis Regalis, Magister Artium in Academia nostra, Philosophiæ Doctor in Bonnensi, Collegii Corporis Christi Socius honoris causa creatus. Qui vir, ut primos eius annos et incunabula

laudis breviter præstringam, si quis alius, vere Wiccamicus vocandus est, cum non solum ipse et postea duo eius filii sed olim pater atque avus in illustrissima Schola Beatae Mariæ de Winton instituti sint. Ita per quattuor hominum ætates huius domus nomen in annalibus Wiccamicis notissimum. Nostræ mox Academiæ particeps et Collegii Corporis Christi alumnus, duos fere et quinquaginta abhinc annos graduatus est.

“ In ὀρνιθολογία quam vocant hic profecto familiam ducit : hoc gubernante Societas Zoologica Britannica laude maxima floret; horti autem Zoologici Londinenses nullis usquam cedunt. Quod ad doctrinam exquisitiorem et rei Zoologicæ peritiam attinet, illud potissimum dixerim, hunc Regionum Zoologicarum naturam et limites primum perspexisse cum regionibus sex constitutis, Palæarctica, Nearctica, Neotropicali, Æthiopica, Orientali, Australi, orbem terræ non hominum civitatibus sed ferarum generibus partiretur. Quam rationem, quinquaginta fere abhinc annos excogitatum, plurimi ita emendare et corrigere conati sunt, quo in numero erat ipse Huxley, vir in hoc genere doctrinæ præstantissimus, ut etiam hodie probatissima et naturæ convenientissima esse videatur. Multa docuit hic vir ingeniosissimus quæ adhuc omnium iudicio comprobantur, velut Africæ septentrionalis harenosæ Nomadum solitudini superiacentia re vera Palæarctica esse atque Europæ affinia; Arabiæ autem meridiana in regionem Africanam sive Æthiopicam cadere : de duabus etiam Americæ continentibus felicissime monuit, hanc ab illa dividi, non isthmo illo Panamensi, sed septentrionali Mexicæ latere, cum ultra citraque hanc quasi lineam accuratissime descriptam diversissima ferarum genera inveniantur.”

The Collection of Birds in the British Museum.—We extract the following paragraphs relating to Birds from the Parliamentary Report on the British Museum for the year ending March 31st, 1901 :—

“The rearrangement of the Exhibition-series has been

continued in the Gallery. Seven additional pier-cases and four large table-cases have been re-filled with new and beautifully-mounted specimens, and the old specimens, when of historic value, have been unmounted and the remainder placed among the duplicates. The mounting of the new specimens has mainly been executed by Mr. Cullingford, of Durham.

“Nine new groups of birds with their nests have been added during the year, viz.:—The Stock-Dove (*Columba œnas*); the Herring-Gull (*Larus argentatus*); the Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*); and the Sandwich Tern (*Sterna cantiaca*), from Scotland, presented by Capt. S. G. Reid and Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant: the Avocet (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) and the Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), from Europe, presented by Messrs. J. Stares and E. Earle: the Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*), from Franz-Josef Land, presented by Mr. F. G. Jackson: White’s Thrush (*Geocichla varia*), from Japan, presented by Mr. Heatley Noble; and the Nutcracker (*Nucifraga caryocatactes*), from Hungary, presented by Mr. C. G. Danford.

“Rapid progress continues to be made with the re-arrangement of the collections of eggs and skeletons. Since December 1899, 14,000 specimens of eggs have been catalogued by Mr. Eugene W. Oates, and various large accessions have been incorporated and made available for reference. The first volume of the Catalogue of Eggs will shortly appear*, and the plates for the second volume have already been drawn.

“The re-arrangement and determination of the bird-skeletons continue to make progress. Mr. W. P. Pycraft has completed the arrangement of the skeletons of the Ratitæ, and those of the Accipitres have been determined and partly arranged. A number of valuable adult birds and embryos in spirits have been added. The collection of birds in spirits is, unfortunately, in a terribly congested state, owing to lack of space in the cabinets, and it is now impossible to find any particular specimen without serious loss of time.

* This is now published, see above, p. 731.

“The actual number of specimens registered during the past year is 6,357. All these have been incorporated and neatly labelled.

“AVES.—The total number of additions to this group is 7,414, of which the following may be specially mentioned:—

“Nine hundred and sixty-seven birds from the interior of British East Africa; presented by Lord Delamere: 90 birds, including the type of a new species (*Cossypha omoensis*), procured on his journey to Lake Rudolf, and presented by Dr. Donaldson-Smith: 121 birds from the New Hebrides, including the types of twelve new species, presented by Capt. A. M. Farquhar, R.N.: 85 birds from Mount Kenya, including the types of four new species and two species new to the collection collected by the Mackinder Expedition: 309 birds from Nyasaland, including the type of a new Swift (*Cypselus sharpii*), presented by Mr. Alfred Sharpe, C.B.: parent-birds, nest, and eggs of the Ivory Gull (*Pagophila eburnea*), from Franz-Josef Land, presented by Mr. F. G. Jackson: 307 birds from Mashonaland and the Congo; presented by Mrs. Jameson: 41 birds from S.E. New Guinea, &c., including one example of a species new to the collection, purchased: 45 birds from Morty Island, purchased: 131 birds from Sarawak, purchased: 104 birds from Mashonaland, purchased: 195 birds and 40 nests and eggs from Sarawak, presented by Dr. C. Hose: 22 birds from British New Guinea, presented by His Excellency R. G. Le Hunte, C.M.G.: 32 birds from French Congo, including the types of two new species, collected by Mr. G. L. Bates, purchased: 33 birds and 37 eggs from the River Ruo, B.C. Africa, including a specimen of *Machærhamphus anderssoni*, purchased: 256 birds from China, including examples of three new species, presented by Mr. C. B. Rickett: 35 birds from North Queensland, presented by Mr. H. C. Robinson: parent-birds, nests, and eggs of the Stock-Dove (*Columba aenas*), Herring-Gull (*Larus argentatus*), Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougalli*), and Sandwich Tern (*Sterna cantiaca*), from Scotland, presented by Capt. S. G. Reid and Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant: 37 eggs from South

Australia, presented by Mr. E. S. Moulden : 95 birds from the Zambesi, presented by Capt. Boyd Alexander : 215 birds and 14 eggs from Australia, presented by Donald MacIntosh : parent-birds, nests, and eggs of the Avocet (*Recurvirostra avocetta*) and of the Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) ; presented by Messrs. John Stares and E. Earle : 104 birds, in spirits, from Costa Rica, purchased : the types of 7 new species of birds from Uganda, presented by Mr. F. J. Jackson, C.B. : 568 eggs from the east coast of N. America, received in exchange from the Princeton University, New Jersey : 19 Greenland Falcons, purchased : 243 birds from South Arabia, including the types of three new species, collected by the Percival-Dodson Expedition, purchased : parent-birds and nest of White's Thrush (*Geocichla varia*) from Japan, and 20 embryo birds in spirits, presented by Mr. Heatley Noble : 14 birds and 13 nests from North Australia and New Guinea, purchased : 82 birds from the White Nile, presented by Capt. H. N. Dunn, R.A.M.C. : a cotype of *Cerasophila thompsoni* from the S. Shan States, presented by Colonel C. T. Bingham : 200 birds from the Andes of Ecuador, purchased : a collection of mummified birds, presented by the Committee of the Egypt Exploration Fund : 12 birds from the Moluccas, including examples of six species new to the collection, purchased : 6 specimens of a new bird (*Tatare vaughani*) from Pitcairn Island, presented by Lieut. Vaughan, R.N. : 3 birds from Hadramaut, Southern Arabia, including the type of a new Grosbeak (*Rhynchostrethus percivali*), presented by Mr. A. Blayney Percival : 950 birds from the Shan States, including the types of seven new species, presented by Colonel G. Rippon : and a specimen of the rare Pigmy Tinamou (*Taoniscus nanus*) from the Argentine Republic, presented by Mr. Noel L. Holden."

Spring Birds at Mashad, N.E. Persia.—In his 'Khurasan and Seistan,' Col. Yate writes as follows:—"Spring at Mashad is a charming time, and the whole country seems to blossom out. Birds of all sorts appear to breed. The Blue Jay or Indian Roller—the *Kulagh-i-Sabz* or Green Crow, as

it is called by the Persians—comes in hundreds, and takes possession of almost every nullah-bank, closely followed by that gay bird, the European Bee-cater, which similarly lays its eggs in a hole in some bank. Almost every Kanat-well has its pair of Pied Wagtails, the sky is full of Swallows and Swifts, and the Persian Nightingale sings and breeds in the gardens. At one time I had two Nightingales' nests and six or seven nests of a little Tree-Warbler in my garden, all within a few yards of the front-door steps. Soon after the middle of April the Quail appear, and the cock birds are netted in large numbers, by means of calls, in the young wheat crops, and sold in the bazaar at the rate of six for a kran. They breed around the town, and towards the end of July, after the corn is cut, young quails are to be found in the grain-fields and are excellent eating. Another bird that breeds in Khurasan in large numbers is the Rose-coloured Starling—the *Sár*, as the Persians call it. The Koh-i-Sangi to the south-west of the town is a favourite resort of these birds; large flocks gather there, and breed amongst the tumbled mass of rocks and boulders that forms the western end of the hill. In June, when the young birds are fledged, men and boys go out from the town with baskets and catch them in numbers. It is a curious sight to see them hunting about the rocks for the nests. The old birds sit around, jabbering away as hard as they can, almost every one of them with either a grasshopper or a white mulberry in its mouth for the benefit of the young birds that, alas for them, are being ruthlessly carried off."

The Honey-guide in Abyssinia.—From the 'Times' of August 18th, 1901, we extract the following paragraph contained in a letter of its special correspondent with the Abyssinian Field Force, dated at Jig-Jigga, May 5th :—

“On our way I made the acquaintance of the '*Morris*' or Honey-bird, of which one has often read in travellers' books, but of whose existence and powers I had personally always been sceptical. I encountered the bird as I was wandering one morning along the hills skirting the valley in search of

any game that might present itself. A bird settled on a tree in front and began to chatter volubly. The Somalis with me explained it was '*Morris*,' the Honey-bird, with tales of whose wonderful doings they had often regaled me. The bird seemed to be of about the same size as a thrush, with a grey breast and yellow beak and long tail. We followed it as it fluttered from bush to bush, and if we halted even for a minute, it came back urging us to move on. The Somalis kept whistling and talking to the bird, which seemed to make it more talkative than ever. At last it stopped and would lead us no further. The men began to search in the jungle to see if it was a lion it was taking us to, for the '*Morris*' is just as likely to do so as to show you honey; but there were no signs of any dangerous animals. On examining the trunks of the trees near by, I found a tiny crevice in the stem of a dead trunk, out of which exuded some moisture, which, on being tasted, was found to be honey. To avoid the attacks of the bees a fire was first lit, in the smoke of which the men could take refuge, and then, the *shikari*, climbing up the stem a few yards, discovered a large hollow running down the length of the trunk. We immediately set to work with our hunting-knives, and cut out the front of the tree sufficiently to allow a man to reach down the hollow, whence he pulled out four long pieces of excellent comb-honey. The bees, curiously enough, did not attempt to molest the thief. The Honey-bird sat by all the time, eagerly watching our doings, and when we left we placed a piece of the spoil on a branch of a tree, which '*Morris*' at once attacked greedily, and we left him there."

Nesting-habits of Hornbills.—At Axum (Abyssinia) a pair of the Scarlet-beaked Hornbills* had their nest in a hollow tree in the garden of the house I inhabited. When I arrived the female had already been plastered up in her nest by the male, who used to feed her daily. Before I left the mud had been removed, and the mother and two young ones were perched on a neighbouring branch, the young not fully

* Probably *Lophoceros erythrorhynchus* (Temm.).

fledged and the mother a most disreputable-looking object, with ragged plumage and unable to fly. The male was then very busy, as he had three to feed.—*Wylde's Modern Abyssinia*, p. 492.

The Australasian Ornithologists' Union.—We are pleased to have received a circular announcing that the AUSTRALASIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION (*cf.* Bull. B. O. C. xi. p. 54) has been successfully started, and that the first General Meeting will be held at Adelaide in October or November of this year. The Journal of the Union will be appropriately named 'The Emu.' Col. W. V. Legge, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U., will probably be the first President.

The Pará Museum.—We are glad to be able to announce that the Governor of the State of Pará has issued a decree ordering that the name of the Museu Paraense shall be in future "MUSEU GOELDI," in honour of its distinguished Director, our excellent correspondent Prof. Dr. Emil Goeldi.

New Ornithological Periodical.—On or about September 1st, 1901, the Bird Club of Princeton University was to publish its first 'Bulletin,' edited by Mr. Wm. E. D. Scott, Curator of Ornithology, Princeton University. It should contain an annotated list of the birds of Princeton and vicinity, by William Arthur Babson, B.S., 1901. This list is the result of four years of scientific observation and study of the birds of Princeton. The 'Bulletin' will contain about seventy or eighty pages, will be plainly bound in paper, and will be sold for one dollar.

Birds in the Zoological Garden, Cairo.—From Capt. Stanley Flower's report, for 1900, on the Zoological Garden at Ghizeh, near Cairo, we learn that 25 species of birds living at large in the Garden were noted during that year. *Turdus musicus*, *Motacilla alba*, and *M. cinereocapilla* are regular winter visitors, besides 5 species of Ducks.

Additions to the U.S. National Museum.—From the report of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution for the year ending June 30th, 1900, we extract the following paragraph:—

“The Division of Birds has received the Goodfellow Collection of Humming-birds, comprising about 1200 specimens; 300 specimens of the birds of the United States of Columbia, from Mr. Outram Bangs; 500 specimens of Hawaiian birds from Mr. H. W. Henshaw; a specimen of the Cuban Macaw (*Ara tricolor*), now believed to be extinct, from Maj. W. A. Glassford, U.S.A.; and a skeleton of the rare Harris’s Cormorant, from Leland-Stanford-Junior University.”

XLIX.—Obituary.

The Abbé ARMAND DAVID, Mr. LIONEL WIGLESWORTH,
and Mr. WILLIAM DOHERTY.

ORNITHOLOGY has sustained a severe loss in the person of the Abbé ARMAND DAVID, the indefatigable explorer of parts of the mysterious interior of China now practically closed to the scientific traveller, and the discoverer of many new facts in Botany and Geology as well as in Zoology.

Born at Espalette in the Department of the Basses Pyrénées on the 7th of September, 1826, and entered at St. Lazare in 1848, he devoted his untiring energies, after a preliminary training of ten years’ educational work at the College of Savone in Italy, to the service of the Lazarist Missionary establishments in China.

In 1862 the Abbé was placed in charge of a French school in Peking, and at once began to give unmistakable proofs of his great interest in science by the valuable collections that he transmitted to the National Museum of his native country, with the full approval of his ecclesiastical superiors. At the same time he was amassing a collection for his scholastic establishment, and had begun to correspond with and profit